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NSC BRIEFING

28 April 1968

25X1C SITUATION IN SAIGON

I. [REDACTED] shells started landing presidential palace and grounds at 1:15 Thursday afternoon (Saigon time).

A. After two had hit in the grounds and one on the palace Diem telephoned Ely, said he was ordering counterfire.

B. Ely, whose quarters only a few blocks from palace, said he had heard no firing.

C. Just then another shell hit apparently ending telephone conversation.

By three o'clock, at least eleven rounds of counterfire had been heard from the vicinity of the palace.

Do. J. T.

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IV. Although Binh Xuyen started firing,

Diem's order of 26 April removing police from Binh Xuyen control forced the issue.

A. Some 400 of 700 police

functionaries had reported to new HQ on 27 April.

B. Binh Xuyen apparently also getting worried because Bao Dai had not yet acted as they anticipated.

C. Bao Dai told US Emb Paris he had made irrevocable commitments and would have to act on them momentarily.

D. He pressed for US views on his plan to solve crisis.

V. In showdown fight, Vietnamese army could drive Binh Xuyen out of Saigon as stopped by French.

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